

Remarks at the 55th session of the Joint Advisory Group (JAG) of the International Trade Centre (ITC)

on 2nd November 2021

Distinguished Chairs, Ambassador Ms. Athaliah Lesiba Molokomme,
and Ambassador Mr. Paul Bekkers,

Ms. Isabelle Durant, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD,
Mr. Xiangchen Zhang, Deputy Director-General of the WTO,
Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director of ITC,

Ambassadors, Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, I would like to extend my congratulations on the successful convening of the 55th Joint Advisory Group (JAG) meeting.

Just as ED has said in the Annual Report , “2020 was a year like no other. A year that redefined resilience”. We are delighted to see that ITC, under the management team’s leadership, has tried every means to carry out projects in innovative ways, by accelerating their digital solutions, to help micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries to pivot towards sustainability, connectivity and inclusivity. We highly appreciate ITC's continuous efforts to help developing countries fight against the pandemic, recover their productivity to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

At a time when the world is facing the combined impacts of changes unseen in a century and the Covid-19 pandemic, Unilateralism and protectionism are rearing their heads. The overall international environment for developing countries to develop is deteriorating. And there are greater difficulties in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

for Sustainable Development. People in all countries long for peace and development more than ever before and, are more determined to pursue win-win cooperation.

On 21st September this year, in his Global Development Initiative proposed at the general debate of the 76th session of UNGA, Chinese President Xi Jinping stressed the need to jointly address global threats and challenges, to pursue a more robust, greener, and more balanced global development, and to advance the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

China stands ready to strengthen its cooperation with ITC on promoting consensus and synergy among all parties towards implementing the above initiative.

First, we must stay committed to development as a priority in support of post-pandemic economic recovery. We will continue to join ITC to facilitate further alignment between the Belt & Road Initiative and various national development strategies and regional cooperation initiatives, safeguard stable and seamless chains of production and supply, improve economic integration, development linkage and benefit sharing among members.

Second, we must remain open and inclusive, and stand firmly behind the multilateral trading system. We should speak unequivocally against unilateralism and protectionism, call for greater liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment, improve market access, and revitalize global trade and FDI flows.

Third, we must explore innovative growth and expand partnerships. ITC should play its key role of “Aide for Trade”, strengthen cooperation with UNCTAD, WTO, G20 and APEC, conduct policy dialogues and actions on liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment, digital economy,

green development, MSMEs and regional trade agreements, identify new development drivers and growth areas, and promote green and low-carbon development.

To conclude, I wish the meeting a full success.

Thank you all.